

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## Senator Joe Paskvan

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*Senate District E – Fairbanks, AK*

Record Center  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Washington, DC 20590

June 19, 2009

Re: SP 14860-N

Dear Director Billings:

This letter is to express my strong support for the Department to grant approval of Special Permit application 14860-N. Many communities in Alaska are not connected to the road or rail system and so they rely entirely on air transportation for everything from food to medical oxygen.

The Special Permit would enable these Alaskan communities to continue to receive oxygen and oxidizing gases as they have safely for years. Not granting the Special Permit would significantly increase the cost of oxygen – or worse – make it even unavailable in many of our communities. This is a significant public health concern.

If this ruling is not modified or if air cargo handlers cannot obtain a variance to transport oxygen cylinders, the quality and access to healthcare will be greatly affected. This may result in a total lack of health care available in 75% of Alaskan locations.

Please consider our unique Alaskan issues. I ask that you grant an exception to the rule for air cargo handlers in Alaska for delivering essential medical gases as we represent a unique rural/remote population that can only be served year round by air cargo.

Sincerely,

Senator Joe Paskvan  
District E – Fairbanks and Fort Wainwright